



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Newton Historical Commission

* A G E N D A *

Date: August 27, 2015

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Room 205, City Hall

1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton,

MA

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

James Freas
Acting Director
Planning & Development

Members

Nancy Grissom, Chairman
Mark Armstrong
Peter Dimond
Jean Fulkerson
Jeff Templer
Laura Fitzmaurice
Ellen Klapper, Alternate
Leonard Sherman, Alternate

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1. 1521 Beacon Street – Full demolition Request to demolish church

Steve Buchbinder, attorney representing the owner of this property, will be presenting plans to demolish this church. Listed in MHC records as St. Philip Neri Church, historic survey number NWT.3846, this church was built in 1928 and designed by architect Edward P.T. Graham. The church was identified as an unusual example of the Tudor Revival Style in that its proportions are more akin to residential developments than what would be expected for a church designed in this style. Unlike other of Graham's churches in the Boston area, which are the Mary Immaculate Church of Lourdes in Upper Falls; Our Lady's Catholic High School; or St. Paul's in Harvard Square, this church lacks the soaring campaniles that are their hallmarks. This was the second Catholic church to be built in Newton until at least 1945.

New front doors and interior work was completed on the building by architect Chester F. Wright in 1953. An addition to the sacristy was designed by architect John C. Powers in 1963, and the kitchen was extended in 1968. The house at 1518 Beacon Street was built in 1924 and until recently served as the rectory for the church. This church has a strong association with influential architects in the Boston area in the 1920s as well as their attempt to acclimate the design of this church to the surrounding residential neighborhood. The church also retains historical integrity as the second oldest Catholic Church in Newton. Staff recommends this building preferably preserved for architectural integrity and historic context.

2. 1110 Chestnut Street – Demolition review Request for partial demolition

This Second Empire Style building with Colonial Revival Style additions/alterations was the first Church rectory for St. Mary's in Upper Falls, and was standing as of the 1874 atlas with one outbuilding. By 1927 Rev. D.H. Donovan was in residence here when he obtained a permit to add two new porches at front and rear entrances, and take down the piazza that was remaining around the house. In 1930 Rev. Donovan still lived there. In 1936 William O'Donnell and Daniel Dunn, both reverends, lived at this address. From 1940-45, the house was vacant; by 1945 Hugh Stephenson, no occupation listed, was residing here. By 1956 long-time owner Emile Turcotte purchased the property, likely from the church, and owned the building through at

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least the 1970s. In 1966 Turcotte built a rear concrete block garage, and in 1967, constructed an addition off the left (north) side. The front porch has since been enclosed, windows have been boarded over, and Queen Anne Style additions over time have given the house what is now a Colonial Revival appearance. Staff recommends this house preferably preserved for an intact representation of style changes over time, as the first St. Mary's Rectory, and for its historic context in Upper Falls.

3. **40 Pine Crest Road – Demolition Review**

Request for partial demolition

The building permit for this Dutch Colonial house is on file with ISD as 1927, owned by Thomas J. Coolidge of Acacia Avenue. Florence Queeney, a widow, lived here with a boarder in 1930. In 1940 the resident was Gerald Ledbetter of Champion Sparkplug. He was still there in 1950. In 1961, the owner was George Burke of the Newton Center Wine Shop. George Burke was still there in 1970 but by 1908 the owner was Thomas Rudegear, no occupation listed. The house is one of many on Pine Crest that were built on this 1920s subdivision behind the row of Victorian houses on Walnut Street, and shares a similar massing and scale with its neighboring homes. The proposed partial demotion will add a substantial rear addition down the slope of this property. Staff is recommending the house preferably preserved for historic context.

4. **174 Valentine Street – Demolition Review**

Request to demolish house and carriage house

This ornate Colonial Revival Style house was built in 1917 as part of a neighborhood of early commuter housing on Valentine Street. The first owners were Florence R. and Frank P. Huckins, and architect Dana Somes, both of 40 Central Street Boston. Huckins/Somes obtained a permit two years later to build the detached garage. By 1929 the long-time owners was Holcomb Brown, a consulting engineer and his wife Florence. In 1953, Holcomb Brown obtained a permit to add a rear entrance and bathroom addition, which was designed by architects Griswold Wylde and Ames of State Street in Boston. In 1966 the owner was Prescott Brown of Southwestern Engineering, not sure if a relation; but by 1968, the owner was Ronald Buck, an investment manager. This house was surveyed as part of a historic district in 1987 that featured unusually ornate examples of the Colonial Revival Style from 1914-1917. At the time, it was described as a "large brick structure enclosed by a slate gambrel roof with bridged chimneys. The centre entry is framed by sidelights and a fanlight and is fronted by an elliptical porch. Flanking the entry are full length French windows." This house is a well-preserved early example of the Colonial Revival style in Newton. Staff recommends the house and garage preferably preserved for architectural integrity and historic context.

5. **15 Shumaker Path - Demolition Review**

Request to demolish house

Built in 1948 by Keltown Realth Trust of Arlington, MA, this is one of the original Oak Hill Park homes built on the path system. In 1949 David Greer, a lawyer, was listed as the owner and continued to live there until at least 1955. By 1963 the owner was Herbert Caplan, an administrator of Barry Controls in Watertown. In 1962 he obtained a permit to build a screened porch addition with a poured concrete slab floor, 10' x 14'. The Caplans still owned the house in 1985, and with the exception of some upgrades in plumbing and electrical systems, there are not other permits in the file. Though Oak Hill Park has undergone a great deal of transition over its post WWII history, this particular cul de sac has seen remarkably little, with four other intact examples of the original ranch style evident, and all of which were built by Keltown Realty Trust. Staff recommends this house preferably preserved for historic context.

6. **28 Evelyn Road – Demolition review**

Request to demolish house

Built after 1936 in a modified Garrison Colonial Style, this house was owned and built by Jacob Hurwitz of Dorchester, MA and designed by architect C.C. Crowell of Newton Center. In 1940 the owner was Chester Finberg, a merchandise manager. In 1955 ownership changed to Felix Cohen, a physician. They were still living there until at least 1975. The house appears to be in original condition, as there are no building permits in the file aside from a plumbing permit in 1955. In addition, this neighborhood is an intact enclave of houses built right after the Depression, which vary in style but are similar in massing and scale, and have

Colonial Revival minimalist detailing in its architectural designs. Staff recommends this house preferably preserved for historic context and architectural integrity.

7. **261 Melrose Street - Demolition Review**

Request to demolish house

This house appears on the 1874 atlas, and again in the 1886 and 1895, and all the way up to the 1940s as owned by Edith Kimball: her husband Frank was a treasurer. By 1947, the owner was Oliver Ellis, conductor, who obtained a permit to build a wood frame addition in the rear. By 1963 Charles Zimmerman, owner and investigator with Scientific Security obtained a permit to build a detached single car garage in the rear of the lot. The Zimmerman family owned the property in the 1980s. In 1999 the siding was replaced from aluminum to vinyl, and in 2005 the windows were replaced under the ownership of Jeremy Cole. Though this Victorian house has undergone some sheathing replacements, its age, massing, scale and orientation make it worth reviewing by the Commission. Staff recommends the house preferably preserved for architectural integrity.

8. **336 Newtonville Avenue – Demolition Review**

Request to demolish house

This item will not be heard on this month's agenda. The owner withdrew the application.

9. **428 Dudley Road – Demolition Review**

Request to demolish house

This house was built in the Ranch Style in 1958 by John Bossi and designed by Joseph Selwyn, a Belmont architect who designed a number of Capes and Ranches in the 1950s in Newton, and both of whom built at least four of the houses on Dudley Road in the immediate vicinity of this one. By 1966, Michael Cyker, worker at a dental supply company, owned the house and resided there through the 1980s. By 1993, the owner was Hadi Salamipour, who built a new single car garage in 1997. This house was built in the typical ranch style for this intact 1950s neighborhood, with single-story living, attached garage, and built on an upper ridge with other Ranch Style houses of similar configuration, scale, massing, materials, and orientation. Staff recommends this house preferably preserved for historic context.

10. **36 Maynard Street – Waiver Request**

Request to waive demo delay

This property was found preferably preserved at the April 2015 NHC hearing and returning four months later with proposed replacement plans.

At the April hearing, staff reported that the house was built in 1953 according to the ISD permit. This Ranch Style house was constructed by Campanelli Homes Inc. and designed by R.I. Williams, as many other houses in this development were. The house was constructed in the classic ell fashion with an attached garage and rear porch. The house was remodeled in 1984 by architect Alan E. Taylor. In 1955 the owner was Philip Blond, a salesman. He was still there in 1964. In 1976 the address was vacant, but by 1980 the owner was Eric Weiner, manager of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce. In 1992 the owner was Steve Clay. Though the house has replacement windows, it still retains its style, massing, scale and context in the neighborhood and staff recommends the house preferably preserved for context.

At the April hearing the owner, Mohsen Alifezaci and his wife presented their plan to demolish this house. They told the Commission they had lived there for ten years and the house was becoming too small. They were also having sewer and water issues with the house and trouble with drainage. They also said that with all the new construction around them the house was becoming dark. Commission members asked whether the owners would move out, tear down, the house, build a new one, and then move back in. The owners said yes. Members discussed the fact that this commission had delayed other demo proposals on this street due to context, and that they believed it was still in evidence of much of this street despite some tear-downs. An abutter who lived behind this house on Crafts Street said that he worried a new house on this lot would loom up and be bigger than the others on the street.

11. 12 Valley Spring Road – Waiver Request

Request to waive demo delay

This house was found preferably preserved at the April 2015 NHC hearing. The developer is returning to the commission with proposed replacement plans.

At the April hearing, staff reported that this house was built on a cul de sac with a neighborhood of similarly designed and massed houses along the northern border of the historic Durant Kenrick property. Built in 1954, this house was owned by Warren Manning, designed by Stanley Myers of Cambridge and built by Ben Franklin Homes. Myers was also the architect at #6 and #11, at a minimum, and the houses on the cul de sac were built by Ben Franklin Homes. Manning was a commercial artist, and still lived there through at least 1985. Due to its intact modernist massing, style, and architectural consistency with the remainder of the cul de sac, staff recommended this house preferably preserved for architectural integrity and neighborhood context.

At the April hearing Mr. Manning, son of the owner, reported that the house he grew up in recently became empty with the death of his father, and he wanted to file a demo application as a contingency to help sell the property. He told the Commission that this house was next door to the one now owned by Kagan development, and that Kagan expressed his interest. Commission members expressed their interest in this neighborhood for its architectural cohesiveness and integrity, and that it should be consistent in finding properties in this neighborhood preferably preserved. Andrew Gordon, an abutter across the street at 17 Valley Spring, told the Commission he was interested in learning what project was proposed for this lot.

12. 1933 Commonwealth Avenue - Waiver Request

Request to waive demo delay

This house was found preferably preserved at the April 2015 NHC hearing, and the owners are returning after four months with proposed replacement plans.

Staff reported that this small Dutch Colonial house was built in 1926, when in that year the owner, Walter Liberty, also obtained a permit to add a garage in the cellar. Lily MacNaught, a widow, lived in the house in 1936. In 1945, a permit was obtained to construct a roof over the sunporch. At this time, the house was owned by Jessie C. Stagg, a plumber. In 1955 the owner was Joseph Collentro, no occupation listed. He still lived there in 1964. In 1975 the owner was John Chambers, an office manager at Polaroid. An addition was added to the northwest side in 1992. Built in a neighborhood of Dutch Colonials from a similar period and style, this house has undergone some alterations over time, but which are still in keeping with the architectural fabric in the neighborhood. Staff recommends this house preferably preserved for historic context.

No owner was present at the April hearing. A prospective buyer for this house started to present replacement plans for the existing house, and was informed by the Commission that this hearing was only for the determination of preferably preserved or not. Commission members discussed the context in the neighborhood and that this was part of a well-preserved Dutch Colonial neighborhood. Abutters at 15 Normandy Road, 43 Sharon Avenue, and a letter by Arruda read into the record supported preservation of the house.

Administrative Discussion:

a) Minutes